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ABSTRACT

A project was conducted at Western Wisconsin Technical College to create a peer tutoring handbook to provide guidance to tutors. This handbook contains a code of ethics, general guidelines for tutoring, ideas for organizing a tutoring session, questioning strategies, communication skills, and special considerations for limited English proficient students. Other topics include arranging first tutoring sessions, using praise, student attitudes, listening skills, tutoring tools, and getting paid. (KC)

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WESTERN WISCONSIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Academic Skills CENTER

General Education Division

Academic Skills Center

Peer Tutoring

Handbook

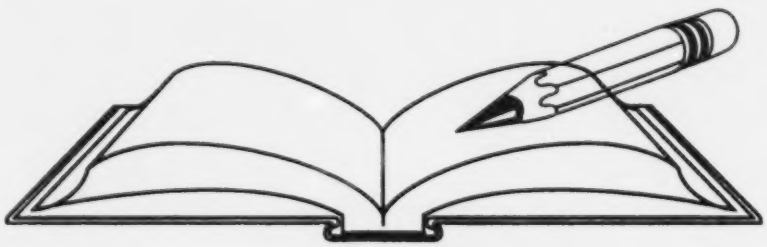

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Table of Contents

The Academic Skills Center 1

What Services Are Available? 1

Goals of the Tutoring Program 2

Letter to Peer Tutors 2

Things to know about the Peer Tutoring Program 3

General Responsibilities of Tutors 3

Tutor Code Of Ethics 4

Training Sessions 5

General Tutoring Guidelines 6

Skills Needed to be an Effective Tutor 7

- *Ethics:* 7
- *Interpersonal:* 7
- *The Session:* 8

Conducting A Tutoring Session 9

General Tips for First Tutoring Session 10

"First Impressions" 10

Other Tutoring Tips to Remember 11

Guidelines for Use of Questioning Strategies 12

Praise 13

- *Different Kinds of Self-Concept Building Praise* 13

Common Student Attitudes 14

Communication Skills 15

- *Good Communication* 15
- *Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication* 15
- *Listening-Responding Techniques* 16

Active Listening Skills 17

Basic Communication Skills Needed in Tutoring Relationships 17

Important Tutoring Tools 18

Special Considerations for LEP Students 19

Getting Paid 20

Tutor's Notes 20

General Education Division
Academic Skills Center

The Academic Skills Center

The Academic Skills Center is part of the General Education Division at WWTC. It is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Its purpose is to provide academic support to WWTC students and faculty. All services offered by the ASC are provided at NO CHARGE to students.

What Services Are Available?

Peer Tutoring:	Free tutoring in course as needed
Note Taking:	Free notetaking for qualifying students
Alternative Testing:	Testing with additional time as needed in a less distracting environment
Reading Comprehension:	Individual plan developed for speed, comprehension, and/or vocabulary development
Supplemental Instruction:	Peer-facilitated study groups attached to "at risk" courses
Study Skills Seminars:	Free seminars offered throughout the year for WWTC students
Study Skills Advising:	Available on a walk-in basis
Individualized Help:	Full-time instructors certified in reading, math, science, English, and speech available daily to help students with coursework or to design individualized "brush-up" programs
English & Speech:	Getting started, organizing ideas
Writing Skills:	Grammar, punctuation, letters, resumes, essays, term papers

Peer Tutoring-
a service of the Academic Skills Center

Goals of the Tutoring Program

To assist students to become independent learners by improving their learning skills and mastery of subject matter in order to better assure student success within the educational setting, personally, and in the workplace.

Letter to Peer Tutors

Dear Tutors:

Western Wisconsin Technical College's ASC welcomes you as a new member of our peer tutoring program. In deciding to become a peer tutor, you have accepted an invitation to embark on your own voyage of learning and new experiences.

Tutoring involves empowerment. You will learn how to empower the students you tutor. They will learn how to express their ideas confidently and effectively. In this process, you will sense your own competence and self-esteem growing.

The journey is not without emotional and intellectual risk, but the rewards far exceed the risks. The ASC staff is here to teach you, encourage you, and support your efforts. You will soon see that you get as much out of your experience as you give.

Good luck as you journey forth; remember-you are not alone.

The Academic Skills Center Staff

Things to know about the Peer Tutoring Program

1. The peer tutoring program is coordinated by the ASC and is funded by a federal grant.
2. There is no charge to students for the tutoring services.
3. Students are eligible for individualized tutoring based on the availability of the tutor and the demand.
4. Tutors are hired, trained, and supervised by ASC staff. Tutors must be approved by an instructor and maintain a reasonable G.P.A.
5. Tutoring sessions are usually an hour in length.
6. Tutors generally work 5-6 hours per week.
7. Students who want help must come to C-227 to fill out a request sheet and sign a tutoring agreement.
8. Tutoring can be short or long term according to the student's needs and/or progress.
9. Tutoring can be one-to-one or in a group setting.

General Responsibilities of Tutors

1. To attend 1 orientation session on tutoring and job responsibilities.
2. To meet tutoring appointments promptly. Keep an appointment book.
3. To keep a tutor reporting log.
4. To meet periodically with the Tutoring Coordinator to determine effectiveness and progress of students.
5. To communicate with the course instructors to receive suggestions and input on individual student's progress.
6. To attend several paid training sessions.
7. To sign a time sheet at the end of each monthly pay period.

Tutor Code Of Ethics

1. Subject proficiency and knowledgeability have top priority in my task as tutor.
2. My major motivation is building the student's self-confidence.
3. My student deserves and will receive my total attention.
4. The language my student and I share must be mutually understandable at all times.
5. I must be able to admit my own weaknesses and will seek assistance whenever I need it.
6. Respect for my student's personal dignity means I must accept that individual without judgment.
7. My student will constantly be encouraged but never insulted by false hope or empty flattery.
8. I will strive for a mutual relationship of openness and honesty as I tutor.
9. I will not impose my personal value system or life style on my student.
10. I will not use a tutoring situation to proselytize my personal belief systems.
11. Both the student and I will always understand my role is never to do the student's work.
12. I count on my student to also be my tutor and teach me ways to do a better job.
13. I will do my best to be punctual and keep appointments, not only out of courtesy but as an example for my student to follow.
14. I will maintain records, lesson plans, and progress data as expected and required.
15. Good tutoring enables my student to transfer learning from one situation to another.
16. Making learning real for the student is what tutoring means, and is an important part of my goal.
17. My ultimate tutoring goal is my student's independence.
18. I will be prepared on time. If I am not, my student may think he/she is not important to me.

*Adapted from the Learning Center at Minneapolis Community College.

Training Sessions

Becoming a tutor is an honor and a task not to be taken lightly. Feel honored that you were chosen by your instructor to assist someone else to grow and learn. It means your instructor has confidence in you and in your potential. We have a support system to help you do the best you can do. It calls for a small amount of time commitment beyond the sessions you will conduct with students. It will enable you to develop your potential as you enter this tutoring experience.

Training sessions will be held to give you help in your job as a peer tutor. Tutoring isn't giving answers or hovering over a student. Your goal is to help the student realize his/her potential as much as possible. Our job in the Academic Skills Center is to help you be the best tutor you can be. You will receive help in structuring your sessions, interpreting behaviors, and questioning techniques.

To further support you, we will have periodic meetings to discuss problems and successes. It is important that you attend these meetings. Please communicate with the Tutoring Coordinator if you must miss any meetings. Absences from meetings can result in your being ineligible to continue tutoring. Also, the Academic Skills Center staff is available to give you support at any time, usually without need of an appointment.

General Tutoring Guidelines

1. Be prepared and on time.
2. Admit if you don't know an answer. You are not the authority. We are all human.
3. Remember your student's privacy. Don't discuss your student with others.
4. Discuss any problems with content or session management with your instructor and/or Academic Skills Center staff persons.
5. Encourage independence in the students. (Don't do homework for them.)
6. Be sensitive to the student's needs. Remember, you may be the student's main support person, especially for this class.
7. Be warm and sincere; relax and create a friendly atmosphere.
8. Try to show that you believe that your student can learn.
9. Accept your student for whatever academic level the student has achieved. Don't act surprised if the student doesn't know something simple.
10. Communicate well and relate meaningfully to your student.
11. Be patient; you may have to go over material often.
12. Be a listener. Give the student your full attention. Plan questions so the student does most of the talking.
13. Start and end with positives.
14. Always give a lot of real praise. It must not be superficial. It must be directed at the particular student behavior that is praiseworthy.
15. Be sure that student succeeds at each session. Start with things the students knows, then move on.
16. Keep the interactions on track. Don't go off on tangents; stay true to the class material. Keep chit-chat under control.
17. Avoid asking "Yes" or "No" questions. Start your questions with explain, tell about, why, what is, etc. (Questioning techniques.)
18. Check to be sure you are understood. Ask the student for feedback. Have her/him explain things to you. This is especially important for ESL students.
19. Watch for nonverbal clues from the student.
20. Model your successful study skills. Let your student see how you study and learn. Be ready to suggest appropriate study skills.
21. Plan your class sessions, but remain adaptable to the student's needs.

Skills Needed to be an Effective Tutor

I. Ethics:

A. You are being paid to be a tutor. Treat your responsibility like a job. A great deal of confidence and trust is being placed in you.

B. Plan for your sessions. Be on time and ready to go. The student's self-worth will be reinforced if you are prepared.

C. You may not always know the answer--don't fake it! Admit it!

D. Always consult with the instructor or Academic Skills Center staff if you have questions, need help, feel confused...We are your support-Use us!!

E. Be confidential-it is a must for your effectiveness. You may become aware of certain problems or information (test scores, etc.). Remember at all times that this information is confidential. Do not discuss students or their problems with other people. (Exception is the instructor or ASC staff.) Your relationship with your student is a professional one. You are an extension of the faculty and a representative of the tutoring program.

F. Students who expect you to do all the work: if you talk more than the students, if you work out all the problems for them, or if you find yourself doing their homework--then you are discouraging students from becoming active learners. You may be hurting them more than helping. You may need to encourage more preparation on their part and explain again what your role should be.

II. Interpersonal:

A. Show a genuine concern for students and sensitivity to their needs.

B. Be a friend.

C. Try to understand students; probe into attitudes and motivation that may hinder their learning.

D. Be aware that outside influences may hinder or affect academic performance (work schedules, broken relationships, etc.). At times you may need to assume a peer, counselor-type role. Listen... and be supportive.

E. Be honest, open, sincere, patient, understanding, flexible, and firm.

F. Realize that this relationship is very similar to any other helping relationship; it takes open honest communication. It will develop in time.

Skills Needed to be an Effective Tutor (cont.)

III. The Session:

A. Explain The Subject Matter

1. Start explanations at an appropriate level. Find out where the problems are.
2. Break the problem or unit into smaller parts.
3. Go from the simple to the more complex.
4. Be organized and help clarify the material in a way that is useful.
5. Work "with" students instead of talking "at" them.
6. Make use of examples whenever possible; have the students come up with examples.
7. If necessary, teach students how to outline, summarize, and underline effectively.

B. Help The Tutoring Go Smoothly

1. Set up clear expectations in regard to things like homework, class attendance, punctuality at tutoring sessions, calling well in advance, etc.
2. Be firm and don't be afraid to be a "bad guy" if you need to, but in a caring, sensitive way.

C. Help Students Become Independent And Confident

1. When students ask you questions, give it back to them--ask leading questions to get a response from the student.
2. Be patient!! This is crucial!!
3. Realize students may not want to answer or do a problem for fear of making a mistake. Try to get them to "try," and let them know it is all right to make a mistake.

DON'T TEACH THEM--HELP THEM LEARN HOW TO LEARN!!

Conducting A Tutoring Session

Basic Tutoring Cycle: Activate prior knowledge 10 minutes, study 40 minutes, review 10 minutes

Introduction

- Put student at ease - warm up
- Be friendly
- Be interested
- Be brief (5-10 minutes)
- Assess student needs
  - ...ask student
  - ...read and discuss student's assignments
  - ...review returned work for teacher comments
  - ...quick verbal reviews

Set up realistic goals for the session

Development-The main part (questioning, drilling, explaining, reviewing, etc.)

- Focus on important parts
- Teach basic concepts and/or skills
- Give concrete examples that student can relate to
- Refer to course objectives
- Assist student in thinking of ways to remember material
- Clarify assignments
- Avoid trying to "go over" several problems
- Identify underlying problems and teach basic concepts and/or skills
- Do exercises together and/or have the student do them independently
- Check to see what demonstrable learning has taken place
- Check for understanding

Closure

- Recap material covered
- Have student set goals for next sessions-what she/he will learn
- Remind student of strategies or skills to practice

General Tips for First Tutoring Session

1. Relax and be yourself.

2. Get acquainted with students during the first session. What is their major, or if undecided, their main interest?

3. Determine tutoring needs in terms of time available, possible tutoring hours, etc.

4. Exchange phone numbers to establish communication.

5. Talk about tutoring expectations and student needs and responsibilities. Give general suggestions for success in the course.

6. Talk with students about Study Skills....Do they want or need specific help with a study schedule, notetaking, tips on taking exams, more effective reading/study methods, etc. If so, provide this help. It may take a separate session or two to share these handouts and suggestions. Academic Skills Center staff can help you with this.

7. Devote most of the first session to an evaluation of the problems students are having. Some other things to consider are:

    *Do they understand the assignments and know what is expected of them? Do they have the text, syllabus, and other pertinent information they need?

    *Do they understand the reading and vocabulary?

    *Do they have effective notes?

"First Impressions"

The first session is extremely important in determining how successful the tutoring will be. "First impressions" are made and the tutor's attitude toward the students is often the determining factor in whether or not students will want to come back!

Other Tutoring Tips to Remember

1. Each subject area has its own peculiarities and each instructor has her/his own approach. It is helpful to schedule an occasional meeting with instructor(s) to discuss different approaches, needs, and progress of students.

2. Be prepared for sessions. Check with instructor periodically to determine direction of the class.

3. Plan with students as well as for them. Make sure you know when exams are coming up, when papers or assignments are due, etc. Keep a calendar for yourself.

4. Remember to BE PATIENT! The subject may be easy for you, but it probably is not for them!

5. Encourage students to find other appropriate help when you are not available (other students in the class, the instructor, etc.).

6. Never comment negatively about instructors. You are an extension of them. You need to view yourself as supplemental help for the instructor.

7. Try not to let students become overly dependent on you. This is not healthy for you or the students.

8. Try to avoid "cram tutoring" the night before a test. This is okay in some instances, but, when appropriate, encourage more regular, consistent help through out the unit.

9. If tutoring drops off toward the end of the semester, don't despair. Hopefully the students have gotten a good basis for "doing it on their own"-- which, after all, is what we want!

10. If a student does not show after ten minutes, call her/him. The student simply may have forgotten.

Guidelines for Use of Questioning Strategies

Tutoring demands a great deal of awareness on your part. The main objective is to help the student learn the content area. While you are guiding the student through the lessons, you might use probing techniques which facilitate the learning process. There are two levels of learning: a) lower order and b) higher order. It would be appropriate to use the lower order questioning techniques at the beginning of a tutoring session to establish the level of contents that the tutee knows. As the tutoring session progresses, you might apply the higher order techniques to facilitate the learning process more effectively. Most college level courses would demand the higher level.

Lower Order	Higher Order
1. Remembering	1. Analysis
2. Understanding	2. Synthesis
3. Application	3. Evaluation

Remembering and understanding are the lowest levels and are the beginning of new knowledge.

Application is an extension of understanding.

Analysis deals with looking at the parts of the whole concept. Compare and contrast or cause and effect are often used in analysis. Synthesizing means the ability to judge the worth of something after understanding the relevant information.

Additional recommendations while questioning:

*Use the questioning strategies when the tutee needs to be guided.
*Don't use questioning when it simply requires a "yes" or "no" answer.
*Don't answer your own question.
*When questioning, don't give too much information.
*Select the questions that require some thought.
*Indicate when answers are correct or incorrect.
*Praise correct answers.
*Do not ridicule incorrect answers.
*Be careful when phrasing questions so that they are understandable.
*When tutee asks for clarification, rephrase it. The same question should not be repeated.
*When the answer is incorrect, guide the tutee to the text or ask a different question on the easier content.
*When help is asked for, guide the tutee through the appropriate probing techniques.

*From The Tutoring Handbook, Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, PA.

Praise

Different Kinds of Self-Concept Building Praise

Tutors can help build their student's self-concept with the right kind of praise. Praise must be sincere and directed at a particular student behavior. Do not use praise if an answer is incorrect, even just to encourage the student. Praise should be directed at the individual's ability and effort with the task. If you are tutoring more than one student, never compare your students.

*Praise as spontaneous expression of admiration:

"That's an interesting example. I never thought of that before."

*Praise as positive guidance or encouragement:

"I like the way you figured out that problem. You stuck with it without giving up."

*Praise recognizing student's prior accomplishments:

"It's not surprising that you did so well on the test, since you did so well on the earlier assignments."

*Praise attributing success to effort and ability:

"Whenever you use your ability and put effort into an assignment, it turns out well."

*Praise focusing on student's enjoyment of a task:

"I could tell that the assignment would be successful. You were having so much fun."

Common Student Attitudes

Eager: These students have a strong desire to learn. Their needs can usually be addressed quickly and they're a joy to work with.

Dubious: Some students aren't sure if they should be here or if they can even be helped.

Fearful: Friendly encouragement is important; try to let these students know what they do well.

Angry: These students are sometimes the toughest to work with. Often, they take their anger out on us if they're angry with their teachers, themselves, or someone else. Try to keep in mind that they're not really angry at us, but that they need to vent their frustrations, and never take sides in these situations.

Some strategies to keep in mind while working with dubious, fearful, or angry students (they might help you be more at ease):

Dubious	Fearful	Angry
1. Be positive	1. Be yourself, you are a student too	1. Remain calm (sounds silly, but it helps!)
2. Encourage them to talk about their concerns	2. Encourage them to talk about the class or instructor	2. Allow student to vent frustration
3. Respond to their writing as tutor, not teacher	3. If you can, clarify the teacher's motive for suggesting tutorings	3. Listen carefully
	4. Make the session fun	4. Restate what they've said, being more positive
	5. Go for a walk	5. Ask another tutor to join the session

From "The Procedures Manual" of the Write Place, St. Cloud State University.

Communication Skills

Good Communication

Good communication is critical in a tutoring situation. It is the underlying principle of any helping relationship. A good student may thoroughly understand the subject matter in a certain course or area but this person will not be an effective tutor if she/he is unable to effectively communicate it to students. A tutor needs to remember at all times that communication is a two-way street. It must go two ways.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Communication is divided into two basic categories: verbal and non-verbal. Most are familiar with verbal expression or behavior. Non-verbal behavior and communication is looking and
listening for feelings that are expressed in actions, facial expressions, etc.

Non-Verbal Anxiety Behaviors	*Non-Verbal Helping Behaviors*	*Non-Verbal Non-Helping Behaviors*
(indicates boredom, frustration, nervousness, anger)		
tapping	good eye contact	yawning
sighing	head nodding	lack of eye contact
swearing	facial animation	sneers
looking around	close physical proximity	frowns
body tenseness	lean toward tutee	distracting movements
fidgeting	occasional smiling	
frowning, chewing on nails or pencil		

Listening-Responding Techniques

In tutoring sessions, you will be in a helping relationship in which appropriate listening and responding techniques are very important. Several techniques to consider are:

Passive Listening: (minimum involvement from the tutor)

The problems, feelings, and solutions are worked through mainly by the student talking it out. Feedback from the tutor may only need to be gestures, nods, or short verbal phrases such as "uh huh," "interesting," "really," "is that right!"

Door Openers: (to get the student talking)

Sometime you may need to openly invite students to talk about their feelings. "Tell me about...," "How did you feel?" "Would you like to talk about it?"

Active Listening: (conscious involvement from the tutor)

This is the communication process using both verbal and non-verbal communication. The tutor communicates understanding and feeds it back to the student.

Open Ended Questions: (to help clarify)

To help define the problem:
- Why to you think this is happening?
- When did this start happening?

To discuss alternative:
- What has worked for you before?
- What are you doing about it?
- What else have you considered?
- What do you want to do?

To help find a course of action:
- I wonder if...
- It sounds to me that you're saying...

Words or Phrases to Encourage Conversation:

- Why...
- How...
- Explain to me what you mean by...
- Give me an example of...
- Tell me more...

Active Listening Skills

1. Understand the emotion behind the student's words (voice intonation and body language).
2. Try to check your understanding of what you hear (paraphrase it back).
3. Make sure you do not interrupt.
4. Do not let yourself be distracted.
5. Check to see if the student wants to comment or respond to what you have previously said.
6. Relax..try not to give the student the impression you want to jump right in and talk.
7. Establish good eye contact.
8. Use affirmative head nods.
9. Use appropriate facial expressions.
10. Avoid nervous or bored gestures.
11. Every now and then, respond to the student with "uh huh," "yes," "I see."
12. Ask clarifying or continuing questions (demonstrates that you are really involved in the conversation).

Basic Communication Skills Needed in TutoringRelationships

1. Empathy--responses that show an accurate awareness of students' feelings.
2. Attending--giving undivided attention both verbally and non-verbally (facial expression and eye contact, etc.).
3. Genuineness--giving natural, honest feelings and self-sharing responses.
4. Respect--an attitude that shows students they are valued and accepted.

*The key to successful tutoring is student involvement and good rapport...

Important Tutoring Tools

The value of LISTENING

We learn by listening, not by talking.

When a situation is tense, listen.

When someone is angry, encourage talking.

When someone is unhappy, listen.

When someone needs encouragement, listen.

Work at listening: don't fake it!
Establish good eye contact and maintain it

Attitude....

It is hard to overestimate the importance of being

sensitive to the attitude one expresses to students.

Build up, rather than tear down.

Show interest and confidence.

Serve as a good role model.

Provide genuine praise.

Communicate.

Create an atmosphere of: Warmth

Respect Challenge Success

Freedom Control

21

Special Considerations for LEP Students

LEP students, students with limited English proficiency, may require some special consideration on your part. Most of the LEP students on the WWTC campus are of the Hmong culture, but not all. First of all, remember to treat them as you would anyone else, with respect. Most of the LEP students who enter college programs are very intelligent. Their largest barrier is language development. In general, they are very eager to learn and are willing to spend long hours in studying. As you become acquainted with your student, you will find it easier to understand him/her and your communication will improve.

Listed below are some general guidelines:

1. Slow down a little.

2. Keep sentences fairly short.

3. Avoid idioms.

4. Be specific with your questions.

5. Help your students with study skills
   (ex: show them how to set up their notebook).

6. Help your students to know what is most important to learn.

7. Meet with your students as soon as possible after class so their notes can be clarified.

8. Check their understanding of the assignment.

9. Ask for feedback from them--don't just ask, "Do you understand?" They may say yes, but really mean "no."

10. Don't speak louder - just more clearly.

Getting Paid

You will be paid to attend one training session as well as the tutoring time you spend with your student(s). You must fill out employment forms in room C-110 with the secretary. From there you receive your time card which you keep with you and fill in as you complete your sessions.

Your time card is due back in C-110 on the last school day of each month. It must be totaled and signed by you to be processed. It is your responsibility to turn it in. You will receive your check around the 10th of the following month. Failure to be timely in submitting your time card will result in your check arriving a month late. It will be sent to the address you use when you fill out your employment forms.

Tutor's Notes: